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ABSTRACT

This report presents the theoretical background of the Stanford Project on Academic Governance. It argues academic organizations differ in major respects from more traditional bureaucracies: hence it is necessary to develop a suitable model of decision-making for use in studying academic governance. The characteristics that set academic organizations apart are described in detail: their goals are ambiguous; they are devoted to client service rather than profit-making; they exhibit a high degree of professionalism; and they are particularly vulnerable to their environment. In light of these characteristics, three models of academic governance are then considered: the bureaucratic and collegial models, and the political model, which is revised and expanded. Although the bureaucratic and collegial models offer valuable insights, the political model is seen as the most satisfactory and complete. A final section analyzes images of leadership and management strategies under each of the three models. (Author)

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ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF GOVERNANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introductory Statement

The Center's mission is to improve teaching in American schools. Its work is carried out through five programs:

- Teaching Effectiveness
- The Environment for Teaching
- Teaching Students from Low-Income Areas
- Teaching and Linguistic Pluralism
- Exploratory and Related Studies

One aspect of the Environment for Teaching Program is the examination of academic organizations. In particular, the governance structures of colleges and universities directly affect the educational processes and the faculty's role in decision making. This paper considers the various models of academic governance and the diverse styles of leadership.

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Decision processes differ in dissimilar organizations. Organizations vary in a number of important ways: they have different types of clients, they work with different technologies, they employ workers with different skills, they develop different structures and coordinating styles, and they have different relationships to their external environments. Of course, there are elements common to the operation of colleges and universities, hospitals, prisons, business firms, government bureaus, and so on, but no two organizations are the same. Any adequate model of decision making and governance in an organization must take its distinctive characteristics into account.

This report deals with the organizational characteristics and decision processes of colleges and universities. Colleges and universities are

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unique organizations, differing in major respects from industrial organizations, government bureaus, and business firms. As a consequence, in studying academic governance it is necessary to develop a new model of organizational decision making. A political model will be offered to supplement the more common bureaucratic and collegial models.

Distinguishing Characteristics of Academic Organizations

Colleges and universities are complex organizations. Like other organizations they have goals, hierarchical systems and structures, officials who carry out specified duties, decision-making processes that set institutional policy, and a bureaucratic administration that handles routine business. But they also exhibit some critical distinguishing characteristics that affect their decision processes.

Goal Ambiguity

Most organizations are goal-oriented, and as a consequence they can build decision structures to reach their objectives. Business firms want to make a profit, government bureaus have tasks specified by law, hospitals are trying to cure sick people, prisons are in the business of "rehabilitation." By contrast, colleges and universities have vague, ambiguous goals and they must build decision processes to grapple with a higher degree of uncertainty and conflict.

What is the goal of a university? That is a difficult question, for the list of possible answers is long and hard to refute: teaching, research, service to the local community, the administration of scientific installations, providing housing for students and faculty, supporting the arts,

solving social problems. In their book Leadership and Ambiguity (1974), Cohen and March comment:

> Almost any educated person could deliver a lecture entitled "The Goals of the University." Almost no one will listen to the lecture voluntarily. For the most part, such lectures and their companion essays are well-intentioned exercises in social rhetoric, with little operational content. Efforts to generate normative statements of the goals of the university tend to produce goals that are either meaningless or dubious. [Cohen and March, 1974, p. 195.]

"Goal ambiguity," then, is one of the chief characteristics of academic organizations. They rarely have a single mission; to the contrary, they often try to be all things to all people. Because their existing goals are unclear, they also find it hard to reject new goals. Edward Gross (1968) analyzed the goals of faculty and administrators in a large number of American universities and obtained some remarkable results. To be sure, some goals were ranked higher than others, with academic freedom consistently near the top, but both administrators and faculty marked as important almost every one of 47 goals listed by Gross.

Not only are academic goals unclear, they are also highly contested. As long as goals are left ambiguous and abstract, they are readily agreed on; as soon as they are concretely specified and put into operation, conflict erupts. The link between clarity and conflict may help explain the prevalence of meaningless rhetoric in academic policy statements and speeches. It is tempting to resort to rhetoric when serious content produces conflict.

Client Service

Like schools, hospitals, and welfare agencies, academic organizations are "people-processing" institutions. Clients with specific needs are fed

into the institution from the environment, the institution acts upon them, and the clients are returned to the larger society. This is an extremely important characteristic, for the clients demand and often obtain significant input into the decision-making processes of the institution. Even powerless clients such as schoolchildren usually have protectors, such as parents, who demand a voice in the operation of the organization. In higher education, of course, the clients are quite capable of speaking for themselves--and they often do.

Problematic Technology

Because they serve clients with disparate, complicated needs, client-serving organizations frequently have problematic technologies. A manufacturing organization develops a specific technology that can be segmented and routinized. Unskilled, semiskilled, and white collar workers can be productively used without relying heavily on professional expertise. But it is hard to construct a simple technology for an organization dealing with people. Serving clients is difficult to accomplish, and the results are difficult to evaluate, especially on a short-term basis. The entire person must be considered as a whole; people cannot be separated easily into small, routine, and technical segments. If at times colleges and universities do not know clearly what they are trying to do, they often do not know how to do it either.

Professionalism

How does an organization work when its goals are unclear, its service is directed to clients, and its technology is problematic? Most organizations

attempt to deal with these problems by hiring expertly trained professionals. Hospitals require doctors and nurses, social welfare agencies hire social workers, public schools hire teachers, and colleges and universities hire faculty members. These highly trained professionals use a broad repertoire of skills to deal with the complex and often unpredictable problems of clients. Instead of subdividing a complicated task into a routine set of procedures, professional work requires that a broad range of tasks be performed by a single professional employee.

Sociologists have made a number of important general observations about professional employees, wherever they may work:

1. Professionals demand autonomy in their work and freedom from supervision; having acquired considerable skill and expertise in their field, they demand freedom in applying them.

2. Professionals have divided loyalties; they have "cosmopolitan" tendencies and their loyalty to their peers at the national level may sometimes interfere with their "local" tendencies to be dedicated employees of their local organization.

3. There are strong tensions between professional values and bureaucratic expectations in an organization that can intensify conflict between professional employees and organizational managers.

4. Professionals demand peer evaluation of their work; they believe that only their colleagues can judge their performance, and they reject the evaluations of others, even those who are technically their superiors in the organizational hierarchy.

All of these characteristics undercut the traditional norms of a bureaucracy, rejecting its hierarchy, control structure, and management procedures. As a consequence, we can expect a distinct management style in a professional organization.

Finally, colleges and universities tend to have fragmented professional staffs. In some organizations there is one dominant professional group; for

example, doctors are the dominant group in hospitals. In other organizations the professional staff is fragmented into subgroups, none of which predominates; the faculty in a university provides a clear example. Burton R. Clark comments on the fragmented professionalism in academic organizations:

> The internal controls of the medical profession are strong and are substituted for those of the organization. But in the college or university this situation does not obtain; there are 12, 25, or 50 clusters of experts. The experts are prone to identify with their own disciplines, and the "academic profession" over-all comes off a poor second. We have wheels within wheels, many professions within a profession. No one of the disciplines on a campus is likely to dominate the others. The campus is not a closely-knit group of professionals who see the world from one perspective. As a collection of professionals, it is decentralized, loose, and flabby.
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> * * *
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> The principle is this: where professional influence is high and there is one dominant professional group, the organization will be integrated by the imposition of professional standards. Where professional influence is high and there are a number of professional groups, the organization will be split by professionalism. The university and the large college are fractured by expertness, not unified by it. The sheer variety of experts supports the tendency for authority to diffuse toward quasi-autonomous clusters. [Clark, 1963, pp. 37, 51.]

The governance processes of academic organizations are strongly influenced by the fragmented professionalism characteristic of them. In fact, this is one of the dominant features of academic organizations, and it justifies viewing the faculty as critical to the decision-making process, as we have done throughout our research in the Stanford Project on Academic Governance.

Environmental Vulnerability

Another characteristic that sets colleges and universities apart from many other complex organizations is environmental vulnerability. Almost all

organizations interact with their social environment to some extent. But though no organization is completely autonomous, some have considerably greater freedom of action than others. The degree of autonomy an organization has vis-à-vis its environment is one of the critical determinants of how it will be managed.

For example, in a free market economy business firms and industries have a substantial degree of autonomy. Although they are regulated by countless government agencies and constrained by their customers, essentially they are free agents responsive to market demands rather than to government control. At the other extreme, a number of organizations are virtually "captured" by their environments. Public school districts, for example, are constantly scrutinized and pressured by the communities they serve.

Colleges and universities are somewhere in the middle on a continuum from "independent" to "captured." In many respects they are insulated from their environment, but recently powerful external forces have been applied to academic institutions. Interest groups holding conflicting values have made their wishes, demands, and threats well known to the administrations and faculties of academic organizations in the 1970's.

What impact does environmental pressure have on the governance of colleges and universities? When professional organizations are well insulated from the pressures of the outside environment, then professional values, norms, and work definitions play a dominant role in shaping the character of the organization. On the other hand, when strong external pressure is applied to colleges and universities, the operating autonomy of the academic professionals is seriously reduced; the faculty and administrators lose control over the curriculum, the goals, and the daily operation of the institution.

Under these circumstances, indeed, the academic professionals are frequently reduced to the role of hired employees doing the bidding of bureaucratic managers.

Although colleges and universities are not entirely captured by their environments, they are steadily losing ground. As their vulnerability increases, their governance patterns change significantly.

A Summary Term: "Organized Anarchy"

To summarize, academic organizations have several unique organizational characteristics. They have ambiguous goals that are often strongly contested. They serve clients who demand a voice in the decision-making process. They have a problematic technology, for in order to serve clients their technology must be holistic and adaptable to individual needs. They are professionalized organizations in which professional employees demand a large measure of control over institutional decision processes. Finally, they are becoming more and more vulnerable to their environments.

The character of such a complex organizational system is not satisfactorily conveyed by the standard term bureaucracy. "Bureaucracy" carries the connotation of stability or even rigidity; academic organizations seem more fluid. "Bureaucracy" implies distinct lines of authority and strict hierarchical command; academic organizations have blurred lines of authority and professional employees who demand autonomy in their work. "Bureaucracy" suggests a cohesive organization with clear goals; academic organizations are characteristically fragmented with ambiguous and contested goals. The term bureaucracy does adequately describe certain aspects of colleges and universities, such as business administration, plant management, capital

outlay, and auxilliary services. But the processes at the heart of an academic organization--academic policy-making and professional teaching and research-- do not resemble the processes one finds in a bureaucracy. Table 1 summarizes the differences between the two types of organizations.

TABLE 1

Organizational Characteristics of Academic Organizations and More Traditional Bureaucracies

	Academic organizations (colleges and universities)	Traditional bureaucracies (govt. agency, industry)
Goals	Ambiguous, contested, inconsistent	Clearer goals, less disagreement
Client service	Client-serving	Material-processing, commercial
Technology	Unclear, non-routine, holistic	Clearer, routinized, segmented
Staffing	Predominantly professional	Predominantly nonprofessional
Environmental relations	Very vulnerable	Less vulnerable
Summary image	"Organized anarchy"	"Bureaucracy"

Perhaps a better term for academic organizations has been suggested by David Cohen and James G. March in the Carnegie series book Leadership and Ambiguity: The American College President. They describe the academic organization as an "organized anarchy"--a system with little central coordination or control:

> In a university anarchy each individual in the university is seen as making autonomous decisions. Teachers decide if, when, and what to teach. Students decide if, when, and what to learn. Legislators and donors decide if, when, and what to support. Neither coordination. . . nor control [is] practiced. Resources are allocated by whatever process emerges but without explicit accommodation and without explicit reference to some superordinate goal. The "decisions" of the system are a consequence produced by the system but intended by no one and decisively controlled by no one. [Cohen and March, 1974, pp. 33-34.]

The organized anarchy differs radically from the well-organized bureaucracy or the consensus-bound collegium. It is an organization in which generous resources allow people to go in different directions without coordination by a central authority; leaders are relatively weak and decisions are made by individual action. Since the organization's goals are ambiguous, decisions are often by-products of unintended and unplanned activity. In such fluid circumstances, presidents and other institutional leaders serve primarily as catalysts or facilitators of an on-going process. They do not so much lead the institution as channel its activities in subtle ways. They do not command, but negotiate. They do not plan comprehensively, but try to apply pre-existing solutions to problems.

Decisions are not so much "made" as they "happen"; problems, choices, and decision makers happen to come together in temporary solutions. Cohen

and March have described decision processes in an organized anarchy as

> sets of procedures through which organizational participants arrive at an interpretation of what they are doing and what they have done while they are doing it. From this point of view an organization is a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues for which they might be the answer, and decision makers looking for work. [Cohen and March, 1974, p. 81.]

The imagery of organized anarchy helps capture the spirit of the confused organizational dynamics in academic institutions: unclear goals, unclear technologies, and environmental vulnerability.

Some may regard "organized anarchy" as an exaggerated term, suggesting more confusion and conflict than there really are in academic organizations. This may be a legitimate criticism. The term may also carry negative connotations to those unaware that it applies to specific organizational characteristics rather than to the entire campus community. Nevertheless, "organized anarchy" has some strong points in its favor. It breaks through the traditional formality that often surrounds discussions of decision making, challenges our existing conceptions, and suggests a looser, more fluid kind of organization than "bureaucracy" does. For these reasons we will join Cohen and March in using "organized anarchy" to summarize some of the unique organizational characteristics of colleges and universities: (1) unclear goals, (2) client service, (3) unclear technology, (4) professionalism, and, (5) environmental vulnerability.[1]

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[1]Our list of characteristics of an organized anarchy extends Cohen and March's, which contains (1) and (3), plus a characteristic called "fluid participation."

Models of Academic Governance

Administrators, organization theorists, and students or professors concerned with academic governance have sought to summarize the essence of a complex decision process as a collegial system, bureaucratic network, political activity, or participatory democracy. Such models organize the way we perceive the process, determine how we analyze it, and help determine our actions. If we regard a system as political, then we form coalitions to pressure decision makers. If we regard it as collegial, then we seek to persuade people by appealing to reason. If we regard it as bureaucratic, then we use legalistic maneuvers to gain our ends.

In the past few years, as research on higher education has increased, models for academic governance have also proliferated. Three models have received widespread attention, more or less dominating the thinking of people who study academic governance. We will examine briefly each of these models in turn: (1) the bureaucracy, (2) the collegium, and (3) the political system. Each of these models has certain points in its favor, and they can be used jointly to examine slightly different aspects of the governance process.

The Academic Bureaucracy

One of the most influential descriptions of complex organizations is Max Weber's monumental work on bureaucracies (Weber, 1947). Weber discussed the characteristics of bureaucracies that distinguish them from less formal work organizations. In skeleton form he suggested that bureaucracies are networks of social groups dedicated to limited goals and organized for

maximum efficiency. Moreover, the regulation of a bureaucratic system is based on the principle of "legal rationality," as contrasted with informal regulation based on friendship, loyalty to family, or personal allegiance to a charismatic leader. The hierarchical structure is held together by formal chains of command and systems of communication. The bureaucracy as Weber described it includes such elements as tenure, appointment to office, salaries as a rational form of payment, and competency as the basis of promotion.

Bureaucratic Characteristics of Colleges and Universities. Several authors have suggested that university governance may be more fully understood by applying the bureaucratic model. For example, Herbert Stroup (1966) has pointed out some characteristics of colleges and universities that fit Weber's original description of a bureaucracy. They include the following:

1. Competence is the criterion used for appointment.
2. Officials are appointed, not elected.
3. Salaries are fixed and paid directly by the organization, rather than determined in "free-fee" style.
4. Rank is recognized and respected.
5. The career is exclusive; no other work is done.
6. The style of life of the organization's members centers on the organization.
7. Security is present in a tenure system.
8. Personal and organizational property are separated.

Stroup is undoubtedly correct that Weber's paradigm can be applied to universities, and most observers are well aware of the bureaucratic factors involved in university administration. Among the more prominent are the following.

1. The university is a complex organization under state charter, like most other bureaucracies. This seemingly innocent fact has major consequences, especially as states increasingly seek to exercise control.

2. The university has a formal hierarchy, with offices and a set of bylaws that specify the relations between those offices. Professors, instructors, and research assistants may be considered bureaucratic officers in the same sense as deans, chancellors, and presidents.

3. There are formal channels of communication that must be respected.

4. There are definite bureaucratic authority relations, with certain officials exercising authority over others. In a university the authority relations are often vague and shifting, but no one would deny that they exist.

5. There are formal policies and rules that govern much of the institution's work, such as library regulations, budgetary guidelines, and procedures of the university senate.

6. The bureaucratic elements of the university are most vividly apparent in its "people-processing" aspects: record keeping, registration, graduation requirements, and a multitude of other routine, day-to-day activities designed to help the modern university handle its masses of students.

7. Bureaucratic decision-making processes are used, most often by officials assigned the responsibility for making routine decisions by the formal administrative structure. Examples are admissions procedures, handled by the dean of admissions; procedures for graduation, routinely administered by designated officials; research policies, supervised by specified officials; and financial matters, usually handled in a bureaucratic manner by the finance office.

Weaknesses in the Bureaucratic Model. In many ways the bureaucratic model falls short of encompassing university governance, especially if one is primarily concerned with decision-making processes. First, the bureaucratic model tells us much about authority--that is, legitimate, formalized power--but not much about nonformal types of power and influence, such as the force of threats or mass movements, expertise, and appeals to emotion and sentiment. Second, it explains much about the organization's formal

structure but little about the dynamic processes that characterize the organization in action. Third, it exposes the formal structure at one particular time, but it does not explain changes over time. Finally, it explains how policies may be carried out most efficiently, but it says little about the critical process by which policy is established. It also ignores political issues, such as the struggles of various interest groups within the university.

The University Collegium

Many writers have rejected the bureaucratic model of the university and sought to replace it with the model of the collegium or "community of scholars." When this literature is closely examined, there seem to be at least three different threads running through it.

A Description of Collegial Decision Making. Those who take this approach argue that academic decision making should not be like the hierarchical process in a bureaucracy; instead, there should be full participation of the academic community, especially the faculty. Under this concept the community of scholars would administer its own affairs, and bureaucratic officials would have little influence. (See Goodman, 1962.) John Millett, one of the foremost proponents of this model, has succinctly stated this view:

> I have already expressed my own point of view in so far as the organization of a college or university is concerned. I do not believe that the concept of hierarchy is a realistic representation of the interpersonal relationships which exist within a college or university. Nor do I believe that a structure of hierarchy is a desirable prescription for the organization of a college or university. . . .

> I would argue that there is another concept of organization just as valuable as a tool of analysis and even more useful as a generalized observation of group and interpersonal behavior. This is the concept of community. . . .
>
> The concept of community presupposes an organization in which functions are differentiated and in which specialization must be brought together, or coordination, if you will, is achieved not through a structure of superordination and subordination of persons and groups but through a dynamic of consensus. [Millett, 1962, pp. 234-35.]

Only a few small liberal arts colleges actually exist as examples of such "round table" democratic institutions.

A Discussion of the Faculty's Professional Authority. Talcott Parsons (1947) was one of the first to call attention to the difference between "official competence," derived from one's office in a bureaucracy, and "technical competence," derived from one's ability to perform a given task. Parsons concentrated on the technical competence of the physician, but others have extended this logic to other professionals whose authority is based on what they know and can do, rather than on their official position. Some examples are the scientist in industry, the military advisor, the expert in government, the physician in the hospital, and the professor in the university.

The literature on professionalism strongly supports the argument for collegial organization, for it emphasizes the professional's ability to make his own decisions and his need for freedom from organizational restraints. Consequently, the collegium is seen as the most reasonable method of organizing the university. Parsons, for example, notes (p. 60) that when professionals are organized in a bureaucracy, "there are strong tendencies for them to develop a different sort of structure from that

characteristic of the administrative hierarchy...of bureaucracy. Instead of a rigid hierarchy of status and authority there tends to be what is roughly, in formal status, a company of equals."

A Utopian Prescription for Operating the Educational System. In recent years there has been a growing discontent with our impersonal contemporary society, which is exemplified in the multiversity, with its thousands of students and its huge bureaucracy. The student revolts of the 1960's and perhaps even the widespread apathy of the 1970's are symptoms of deeply felt alienation between students and the massive educational establishments. The discontent and anxiety this alienation has produced are aptly expressed in the now-famous sign worn by a Berkeley student: "I am a human being--do not fold, spindle, or mutilate."

As an alternative to this impersonal, bureaucratized educational system, many critics are calling for a return to the "academic community," which in their conception would offer personal attention, humane education, and "relevant confrontation with life." Paul Goodman's Community of Scholars (1962) appeals to many who seek to reform the university, citing the need for more personal interaction between faculty and students, for more relevant courses, and for educational innovations to bring the student into existential dialogue with the subject matter of his discipline. The number of articles on this subject, in both the mass media and the professional journals, is astonishingly large. Indeed, this concept of the collegial academic community is now widely proposed as one answer to the impersonality and meaninglessness of today's large multiversity. Thus conceived, the collegial model functions more as a revolutionary ideology and a utopian projection than a description of actual governance processes at any university.

Weaknesses in the Collegial Model. The three themes incorporaced in the collegial model--decision making by consensus, the professional authority of faculty members, and the call for more humane education--are all legitimate and appealing. Few would deny that our universities would be more truly centers of learning if we could somehow implement these objectives. There is a misleading simplicity about the collegial model, however, that glosses over many realities of a complex university.

For one thing, the descriptive and normative enterprises are often confused. In the literature dealing with the collegial model it is often difficult to tell whether a writer is saying that the university is a collegium or that it ought to be a collegium. Frequently discussions of the collegium are more a lament for paradise lost than a description of present reality. Indeed, the collegial image of round-table decision making is not an accurate description of the processes in most institutions, as data in later papers will clearly show. Although at the department level there are many examples of collegial decision making, at higher levels it usually exists only in some aspects of the committee system. Of course, the proponents may be advocating a collegial model as a desirable goal or reform strategy, rather than a present reality that helps us to understand the actual workings of universities.

In addition, the collegial model fails to deal adequately with the problem of conflict. When Millett emphasizes the "dynamic of consensus," he neglects the prolonged battles that precede consensus, as well as decisions that actually represent the victory of one group over another. Proponents of the collegial model are correct in declaring that simple bureaucratic rule making is not the essence of decision making, but in making this point

they take the equally indefensible position that major decisions are reached primarily by consensus. Neither extreme is correct, for decisions are rarely made by either bureaucratic fiat or simple consensus.

The University as a Political System

In Power and Conflict in the University (1971) Baldridge proposed a political model of university governance. Although the other major models of governance--the collegial and the bureaucratic--have valuable insights to offer, we believe that further insights can be gained from this political model, which not only accommodates bureaucratic elements and the dynamics of consensus but also grapples with the power plays, conflict, and rough-and-tumble politics to be found in many academic institutions.

Basic Assumptions of a Political Model. The political model assumes that complex organizations can be studied as miniature political systems, with interest group dynamics and conflicts similar to those in cities, states, or other political entities. The political model has several stages, all of which center on the policy-forming processes. Policy formation was selected as the focal point because major policies commit an organization to definite goals and set the strategies for reaching those goals. Policy decisions are critical decisions; they have a major impact on an organization's future. Of course, in any practical situation it may be difficult to separate the routine from the critical, for issues that seem minor at one point may later be decisive or vice versa. In general, however, policy decisions bind an organization to important courses of action.

Since policies are so important, people throughout an organization try to influence them to reflect their own interests and values. Policy making

becomes a vital target of interest group activity that permeates the organization. Owing to its central importance, then, the organization theorist may select policy formation as the key for studying organizational conflict and change, just as the political scientist often selects legislative acts as the focal point for his analysis of a state's political processes. With policy formation as its key issue, the political model operates on a series of assumptions about the political process.

1. To say that policy making is a political process is not to say that everyone is involved. On the contrary, inactivity prevails. Most people most of the time find the policy-making process an uninteresting, unrewarding activity; policy making is therefore left to the administrators. This is characteristic not only of policy making in universities but of political processes in society at large. Voters do not vote; citizens do not attend city council meetings; parents often permit school boards to do what they please. By and large, decisions that may have a profound effect on our society are made by small groups of elites.

2. Even people who are active engage in fluid participation: they move in and out of the decision-making process. Rarely do people spend much time on any given issue; decisions, therefore, are usually made by those who persist. This normally means that small groups of political elites govern most major decisions, for they invest the necessary time in the process.

3. Colleges and universities, like most other social organizations, are characterized by fragmentation into interest groups with different goals and values. When resources are plentiful and the organization is prospering, these interest groups engage in only minimal conflict. But when resources

are tight, outside pressure groups attack, or internal groups try to assume command, they are likely to mobilize and try to influence decisions.

4. In a fragmented, dynamic social system conflict is natural; it is not necessarily a symptom of breakdown in the academic community. In fact, conflict is a significant factor in promoting healthy organizational change.

5. The pressure that groups can exert places severe limitations on formal authority in the bureaucratic sense. Decisions are not simply bureaucratic orders but are often negotiated compromises between competing groups. Officials are not free simply to issue a decision; instead they must attempt to find a viable course acceptable to several powerful blocs.

6. External interest groups exert a strong influence over the policy-making process. External pressures and formal control by outside agencies--especially in public institutions--are powerful shapers of internal governance processes.

The Political Decision Model Versus the Rational Decision Model. Often the bureaucratic model of organizational structure is accompanied by a rational model of decision making. It is usually assumed that in a bureaucracy the structure is hierarchical and well organized, and that decisions are made through clear-cut, predetermined steps. Moreover, a definite, rational approach is expected to lead to the optimal decision. Graham T. Allison has summarized the rational decision-making process as follows:

> 1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. The goals and objectives of the agent are translated into a "payoff" or "utility" or "preference" function, which represents the "value" or "utility" of alternative sets of consequences. At the outset of the decision problem the agent has a payoff function which ranks all possible sets of consequences in terms of his values and objectives. Each bundle of consequences will contain a number of side effects. Nevertheless, at a minimum, the agent must be able to rank in order of preference each possible set of consequences that might result from a particular action.

> 2. ALTERNATIVES. The rational agent must choose among a set of alternatives displayed before him in a particular situation. In decision theory these alternatives are represented as a decision tree. The alternative courses of action may include more than a simple act, but the specification of a course of action must be sufficiently precise to differentiate it from other alternatives.
>
> 3. CONSEQUENCES. To each alternative is attached a set of consequences or outcomes of choice that will ensue if that particular alternative is chosen. Variations are generated at this point by making different assumptions about the accuracy of the decision maker's knowledge of the consequences that follow from the choice of each alternative.
>
> 4. CHOICE. Rational choice consists simply of selecting that alternative whose consequences rank highest in the decision maker's payoff function. [Allison, 1971, pp. 29-30.]

The rational model appeals to most of us who like to regard our actions as essentially goal-directed and rational. Realistically, however, we should realize that the rational model is more an ideal than an actual description of how people act. In fact, the confused organizational setting of the university, political constraints can undermine the force of rationality. A political model of decision making requires us to answer some new questions about the decision process:

> The first new question posed by the political model is <u>why</u> a given decision is made at all. The formalists have already indicated that "recognition of the problem" is one element in the process, but too little attention has been paid to the activities that bring a particular issue to the forefront. Why is <u>this</u> decision being considered at <u>this</u> particular time? The political model insists that interest groups, powerful individuals, and bureaucratic processes are critical in drawing attention to some decisions rather than to others. A study of "attention cues" by which issues are called to the community's attention is a vital part of any analysis.
>
> Second, a question must be raised about the right of any person or group to make the decisions. Previously the <u>who</u> question was seldom raised, chiefly because the decision literature was developed for hierarchical organizations in which the focus of authority could be easily defined. In a more loosely coordinated

> system however, we must ask a prior question: Why was the legitimacy to make the decision vested in a particular person or group? Why is Dean Smith making the decision instead of Dean Jones or why is the University Senate dealing with the problem instead of the central administration? Establishing the right of authority over a decision is a political question, subject to conflict, power manipulation, and struggles between interest groups. Thus the political model always asks tough questions: Who has the right to make the decision? What are the conflict-ridden processes by which the decision was located at this point rather than at another? The crucial point is that often the issue of who makes the decision has already limited, structured, and pre-formed how it will be made.
>
> The third new issue raised by a political interpretation concerns the development of complex decision networks. As a result of the fragmentation of the university, decision making is rarely located in one official; instead it is dependent on the advice and authority of numerous people. Again the importance of the committee system is evident. It is necessary to understand that the committee network is the legitimate reflection of the need for professional influence to intermingle with bureaucratic influence. The decision process, then, is taken out of the hands of individuals (although there are still many who are powerful) and placed into a network that allows a cumulative buildup of expertise and advice. When the very life of the organization clusters around expertise, decision making is likely to be diffused, segmentalized, and decentralized. A complex network of committees, councils, and advisory bodies grows to handle the task of assembling the expertise necessary for reasonable decisions. Decision making by the individual bureaucrat is replaced with decision making by committee, council, and cabinet. Centralized decision making is replaced with diffuse decision making. The process becomes a far-flung network for gathering expertise from every corner of the organization and translating it into policy. [Baldridge, 1971, p. 190.]

The fourth new question raised by the political model concerns alternative solutions to the problem at hand. The rational decision model suggests that all possible options are open and within easy reach of the decision maker. A realistic appraisal of decision dynamics in most organizations, however, suggests that by no means are all options open. The political dynamics of interest groups, the force of external power blocs, and the opposition of powerful professional constituencies may leave only a handful of viable

options. The range of alternatives is often sharply limited by political considerations. Just as important, there is often little time and energy available for seeking new solutions. Although all possible solutions should be identified under the rational model, in the real world administrators have little time to grope for solutions before their deadlines.

In Power and Conflict in the University Baldridge summed up the political model of decision making as follows:

> First, powerful political forces--interest groups, bureaucratic officials, influential individuals, organizational subunits--cause a given issue to emerge from the limbo of on-going problems and certain "attention cues" force the political community to consider the problem. Second, there is a struggle over locating the decision with a particular person or group, for the location of the right to make the decision often determines the outcome. Third, decisions are usually "preformed" to a great extent by the time one person or group is given the legitimacy to make the decision; not all options are open and the choices have been severely limited by the previous conflicts. Fourth, such political struggles are more likely to occur in reference to "critical" decisions than to "routine" decisions. Fifth, a complex decision network is developed to gather the necessary information and supply the critical expertise. Sixth, during the process of making the decision political controversy is likely to continue and compromises, deals,and plain head cracking are often necessary to get any decision made. Finally, the controversy is not likely to end easily. In fact, it is difficult even to know when a decision is made, for the political processes have a habit of unmaking, confusing, and muddling whatever agreements are hammered out.
>
> This may be a better way of grappling with the complexity that surrounds decision processes within a loosely coordinated, fragmented political system. The formal decision models seem to have been asking very limited questions about the decision process and more insight can be gained by asking a new set of political questions. Thus the decision model that emerges from the university's political dynamics is more open, more dependent on conflict and political action. It is not so systematic or formalistic as most decision theory, but it is probably closer to the truth. Decision making, then, is not an isolated technique but another critical process that must be integrated into a larger political image. [Baldridge, 1971, pp. 191-92.]

A Political Analysis of the Decision Process. As Baldridge described it in Power and Conflict in the University, the political model offers an analytical scheme to describe and map the political events surrounding individual decisions. The organization theorist examining academic policy making wants to know how the social structure of the college or university influences the decision processes, how political pressures are brought to bear on decision makers, how decisions are forged out of the conflict, and how formulated policies are implemented. Thus, as Figure 1 shows, the political model has five points of analysis.

1. Social context. Academic organizations are splintered into social groups with basically different life styles and political interests. Indeed, academic organizations have particularly pluralistic social systems because both internal and external groups may apply pressure in different directions according to their own special interests. Many of the conflicts on university campuses have their roots in the complexity of the academic social context and in the diverse goals and values held by the various groups. Of course, it is important to examine the social setting, since the pressures and conflicts it generates are keenly felt by decision makers.

2. Interest articulation. The articulation of interests is a fundamental part of an interest group's attempts to influence decision making. How does a group exert pressure, what threats or promises can it make, and how does it translate its desires into political capital?

3. Legislative transformation. Legislative bodies respond to pressures, transforming conflicting interests into politically feasible policy. In the process negotiations are undertaken, compromises are forged, and rewards are divided. Committees meet, commissions report, negotiators bargain, and

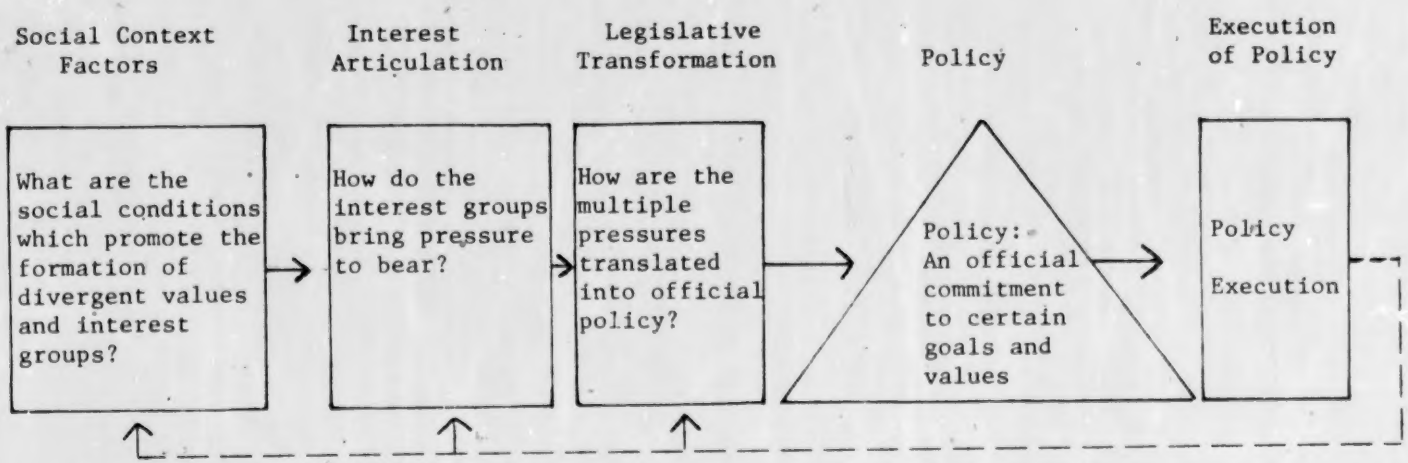
Social Context Factors
Interest Articulation
Legislative Transformation
Policy
Execution of Policy
What are the social conditions which promote the formation of divergent values and interest groups?
How do the interest groups bring pressure to bear?
How are the multiple pressures translated into official policy?
Policy: An official commitment to certain goals and values
Policy Execution
Feedback processes: The generation of new political conflicts.

Fig. 1. Policy formulation in academic organizations: A simple political model. (Source: Baldridge, 1971, p. 63.)

powerful people argue over decisions. Not only must we identify the types of interest groups and the methods they use to apply pressure, but we must also clarify the process by which these pressures are transformed into policy.

4. Policy. When the articulated interests have gone through the conflict and compromise stages, and the final legislative action is taken, policy has been set. The policy is the official climax to the conflict. It represents an authoritative, binding decision to commit the organization to one set of possible alternative actions, and one set of goals and values.

5. Execution of policy. The battle is officially over, and the resulting policy is turned over to the bureaucrats for execution. Indeed, yesterday's vicious confrontation often becomes today's routine bureaucratic chore. But this conclusion may not be final, for interest groups that feel they lost the battle may initiate a new round of interest articulation. Moreover, policy execution inevitably produces feedback, for it generates fresh tensions and new vested interests; a renewed cycle of political conflict ensues.

From this discussion it is clear that a political analysis of academic governance emphasizes certain factors over others. First, it is concerned primarily with problems of goal setting and conflicts over values, rather than with efficiency in achieving goals. Second, the analysis of change processes and the organization's adaptation to its changing internal and external environment have critical importance, since the political dynamics of a university are constantly changing, pressuring the university in many directions, and forcing change throughout the academic system. Third, the analysis of conflict and conflict resolution is an essential component.

Fourth, the role interest groups play in pressuring decision makers to formulate certain policy is also an important component. Finally, much attention should be given to the legislative and decision-making phases--the processes by which pressures and power are transformed into policy. Taken together these five points constitute the bare outline for a political analysis of academic governance.

Table 2 presents a summary and comparison of the three basic models of decision-making and governance we have just described.

The Revised Political Model: An Environmental and Structuralist Approach. Since the political model of academic governance originally appeared in Power and Conflict in the University, we have become aware that it has several shortcomings. For this reason we developed a revised political model to serve as the basis for the Stanford Project on Academic Governance.

First, the original political model probably underestimated the impact of routine bureaucratic processes. Many decisions are made not in the heat of political controversy but according to standard operating procedures. The political description in Power and Conflict in the University was based on a study of New York University at a time of extremely high conflict, when the university was confronted with two crises, a student revolution and a financial disaster. The political model developed from that study probably overstresses the role of conflict and negotiating as elements in standard decision making, since those were the processes that were most apparent at the time. In our current research we have taken greater care to consider routine procedures part of the governance process.

TABLE 2

Three Models of Decision-Making and Governance

	Bureaucratic	Collegial	Political
Assumptions about structure	Hierarchical bureaucracy	Community of peers	Fragmented, complex professional federation
Social	Unitary: integrated by formal system	Unitary: integrated by peer consensus	Pluralistic: encompasses different interest groups with divergent values
Basic theoretical foundations	Weberian bureaucracy, classic studies of formal systems	Professionalism literature, human-relations approach to organization	Conflict analysis, interest group theory, community power literature
View of decision-making process	"Rational" decision making; standard operating procedures	Shared collegial decision: consensus, community participation	Negotiation, bargaining, political influence, political brokerage, external influence
Cycle of decision-making	Problem definition Search for alternatives Evaluation of alternatives Calculus Choice Implementation	As in bureaucratic model, but in addition stresses the involvement of professional peers in the process	Emergence of issue out of social context Interest articulation Conflict Legislative process Implementation of policy Feedback

Second, the original political model, based on a single case study, did not do justice to the broad range of political activity that occurs in different kinds of institutions. For example, NYU is quite different from Oberlin College, and both are distinctive institutions compared to local community colleges. Many of the intense political dynamics observed in the NYU study may have been exaggerated in a huge, troubled institution such as NYU, particularly during the heated conflicts of the late 1960's. In order to correct this problem the Stanford Project on Academic Governance surveyed a large random sample of all higher educational institutions after much of the campus discord of the 1960's was over.

Third, we wanted to stress even more strongly the central role of environmental factors. Certainly the NYU analysis showed that conflict and political processes within the university were linked to certain environmental factors. The Stanford Project on Academic Governance enlarged its view of environmental factors by taking them explicitly into account. We carefully studied the financial bases, political relationships, linkages to state systems and religious bodies, and a host of other environmental factors for each institution sampled. In addition, we established a theoretical framework to link internal political processes to the environmental context.

Fourth, and last, as developed in Power and Conflict in the University, the political model suffered from an "episodic" character. That is, the model did not give enough emphasis to long-term decision-making patterns, and it failed to consider the way institutional structure may shape and channel political efforts. Centralization of power, the development of decision councils, long-term patterns of professional autonomy, the dynamics of departmental power, and the growth of unionization were all slighted by

the original political model. Our current research has concentrated more on long-term decision-making patterns: What groups tend to dominate decision making over long periods of time? Do some groups seem to be systematically excluded from the decision-making process? Do different kinds of institutions have different political patterns? Do institutional characteristics affect the morale of participants in such a way that they engage in particular decision-influencing activities? Do different kinds of institutions have systematic patterns of faculty participation in decision making? Are decision processes highly centralized in certain kinds of institutions?

Thus in our current research we are still asking political questions: Where is the conflict, who participates, who influences decisions, how are decision outcomes affected by structure? But to summarize, three basic readjustments to the political model are being made:

1. The scope of the model's application has been enlarged. We are trying to account for the diversity of political processes by taking a large random sample of all American colleges and universities.
2. A strong environmentalist approach has been introduced. We are explicitly incorporating a discussion of the impact of environmental factors on the political process.
3. A consideration of long-term and routine decision-making patterns and structures has been introduced. We are shifting our focus away from the description of a single decision-making event.

Finally, we are not substituting the political model for the bureaucratic or collegial model of academic decision making. In a sense, they each address a separate set of problems, and taken together, they often yield complementary interpretations. We believe, however, that the political model has many strengths, and we offer it as a useful tool for understanding academic governance.

Images of Leadership and Management Strategies

In this report we have made two basic arguments: (1) colleges and universities are unique in many of their organizational characteristics, and as a consequence, it is necessary to create new models to help explain organizational structure, governance, and decision making; and (2) a political model of academic governance offers useful insights in addition to those offered by the bureaucratic and collegial models. In this section we will suggest that some alternative images of leadership and management style are needed to accommodate the unique characteristics of academic organizations.

Leadership Under the Bureaucratic Model

Under the bureaucratic model the leader is seen as a hero who stands at the top of a complex pyramid of power. The hero's job is to assess problems, propose alternatives, and make rational choices. Much of the organization's power is held by the hero, and great expectations are raised because people trust him to solve their problems and to fend off threats from the environment. The image of the authoritarian hero is deeply ingrained in most societies and in the philosophy of most organization theorists.

We expect leaders to possess a unique set of skills with emphasis on problem-solving ability and technical knowledge about the organization. The principles of "scientific management," such as Planning Programing Budgeting Systems (PPBS) and Management by Objectives, are often proposed as the methods for rational problem solving. Generally, schools of management, business, and educational administration teach such courses to develop the technical skills that the hero-planner will need in leading the organization.

Although the hero image is deeply imbedded in our cultural beliefs about leadership, in organizations such as colleges and universities it is out of place. Power is more diffuse in these organizations; it is lodged with professional experts and fragmented into many departments and subdivisions. Under these circumstances, high expectations about leadership performance often cannot be met, for the leader has neither the power nor the information necessary to consistently make heroic decisions. Moreover, the scientific management procedures prescribed for organizational leaders quickly break down under conditions of goal ambiguity, professional dominance, and environmental vulnerability--precisely the organizational characteristics of colleges and universities. Scientific management theories make several basic assumptions: (1) the organization's goals are clear; (2) the organization is a closed system insulated from environmental penetration; and (3) the planners have the power to execute their decisions. These assumptions seem unrealistic in the confused and fluid world of the organized anarchy.

Leadership Under the Collegial Model

The collegial leader presents a stark contrast to the heroic bureaucratic leader. The collegial leader is above all the "first among equals" in an academic organization run by professional experts. Essentially, the collegial model proposes management by consensus, what John Millett calls the "dynamic of consensus in a community of scholars." The basic role of the collegial leader is not so much to command as to listen, not so much to lead as to gather expert judgments, not so much to manage as to facilitate, not so much to order but to persuade and negotiate.

Obviously, the skills of a collegial leader differ from the scientific management principles employed by the heroic bureaucrat. Instead of technical problem-solving skills, the collegial leader needs both professional expertise to ensure that he is held in high esteem by his colleagues and talent in interpersonal dynamics to achieve the consensus in organizational decision making. The collegial leader's role is more modest and more realistic; he does not stand alone, since other professionals share the burden of decision making with him. Negotiation and compromise are the bywords of the collegial leader; authoritarian strategies are clearly inappropriate.

Leadership Under the Political Model

Under the political model the leader is a mediator or negotiator between power blocs. Unlike the autocratic academic president of the past, who ruled with an iron hand, the contemporary president must play a political role by pulling coalitions together to fight for desired changes. The academic monarch of yesteryear has almost vanished; in his place is not the academic hero-bureaucrat, as many suggest, but the academic statesman. Robert Dahl has painted an amusing picture of the political maneuvers of Mayor Richard Lee of New Haven, and the same description applies to the new academic political leaders:

> The mayor was not at the peak of a pyramid but rather at the center of intersecting circles. He rarely commanded. He negotiated, cajoled, exhorted, beguiled, charmed, pressed, appealed, reasoned, promised, insisted, demanded, even threatened, but he most needed support and acquiescence from other leaders who simply could not be commanded. Because the mayor could not command, he had to bargain. [Dahl, 1961, p. 204.]

Baldridge elaborated on leadership under the political model in Power and Conflict in the University:

> The political interpretation of leadership can be pressed even further, for the governance of the university more and more comes to look like a "cabinet" form of administration. The key figure today is not the president, the solitary giant, but the political leader surrounded by his staff, the prime minister who gathers the information and expertise to construct policy. It is the "staff," the network of key administrators, that makes most of the critical decisions. The university has become much too complicated for any one man, regardless of his stature. Cadres of vice-presidents, research men, budget officials, public relations men, and experts of various stripes surround the president, sit on the cabinet, and help reach collective decisions. Expertise become more critical than ever and leadership becomes even more the ability to assemble, lead, and facilitate the activities of knowledgable experts.
>
> Therefore, the president must be seen as a "statesman" as well as a "hero-bureaucrat." The bureaucratic image might be appropriate for the man who assembles data to churn out routine decisions with a computer's help. In fact, this image is fitting for many middle-echelon officials in the university. The statesman's image is much more accurate for the top administration, for here the influx of data and information gives real power and possibilities for creative action. The statesman is the innovative actor who uses information, expertise, and the combined wisdom of the cabinet to plan the institution's future; the bureaucrat may only be a number manipulator, a user of routine information for routine ends. The use of the cabinet, the assembly of expertise, and the exercise of political judgment in the service of institutional goals--all this is part of the new image of the statesman leader which must complement both the hero leader and the collegial leader. [Baldridge, 1971, pp. 204-6.]

Table 3 presents a summary and comparison of the three basic images of leadership and management we have just described.

Summary

Colleges and universities are different from most other kinds of complex organizations. Their goals are more ambiguous and contested, they

TABLE 3

Images of Leadership and Management Under Three Models of Governance

	Bureaucratic	Collegial	Political
Basic leadership image	Hero	"First among equals"	Statesman
Leadership skills	Technical problem-solving skills	Interpersonal dynamics	Political strategy, interpersonal dynamics, coalition management
Management	"Scientific management"	Management by consensus	Strategic decision-making
Expectation	Very high: people believe the hero can solve problems and leader tries to play the role	Modest: leader is developer of consensus among professionals	Modest: leader marshals political action, but is constrained by the counter efforts of other groups

serve clients instead of seeking to make a profit, their technologies are unclear and problematic, and professionals dominate the work force and decision-making process. Thus colleges and universities are not standard bureaucracies, but can best be described as "organized anarchies" (see Cohen and March, 1947).

What kind of decision and governance processes are to be found in an organized anarchy? Does the decision process resemble a bureaucratic system, with rational problem solving and standard operating procedures? Does it resemble a collegial system in which the professional faculty participate as members of a "community of scholars"? Or does it appear to be a political process with various interest groups struggling for influence over organizational policy? Each image is valid, but we have argued that policy making in an academic organization can be represented best by a political model.

If colleges and universities have the unique organizational features of organized anarchies, and if their decision processes resemble the dynamics of a political system, then we must question the standard images of leadership and management. Classic leadership theory, based on a bureaucratic model, suggests the image of the organizational leader as a hero who uses principles of scientific management as the basis for his decisions. We have suggested that the leader's image should be that of the academic statesman, and that management should be considered a process of strategic decision making.

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